525 acres. Out of the latter area, 124 square miles and 204 acres have been proposed for conversion into reserved forests and 11 square miles and 321 acres into fuel and grazing blocks. There is practically little scope for further forest reservation in Travancore. In regard to Forest Settlement, it is seen that there are 37 blocks pending enquiry and that 7 more blocks will be ready for enquiry ere long. The question of appointing a full-time Forest Settlement Officer to dispose of these cases at an early date has been under the consideration of the Government and it is proposed to make provision for this appointment in the budget for 1094.

13. **Working plans.**—Detailed working plans have been sanctioned in respect of 271 square miles and 526 acres and are in preparation in respect of 335 square miles and 367 acres, leaving a balance of 1,736 square miles and 557 acres for which the preparation of plans still remains to be taken in hand. At the Forest Conference held in 1092, it was suggested that, in view of the incompleteness and unreliability of the data available, the preparation of working plans on an elaborate and detailed scale would not be desirable at present and that the preparation of simple preliminary working schemes by the officers in charge of the respective Forest Divisions would be sufficient to meet immediate requirements. This suggestion has been approved by the Government as a tentative measure. But the department has been distinctly informed that these simple working schemes should not be allowed to take the place of the regular working plans contemplated in the Forest Code.

14. **Extension of cultivation.**—With a view to the extension of cultivation and the development of traffic on the Western Outlet road which has been made cartable as far as the 35th mile, three blocks of reserved forest adjoining that road, comprising about 3,500 acres, were ordered to be disafforested and assigned for registry under the *puduval* rules. Another area of 2,099 acres, comprising blocks of marshy and low-lying lands included in reserves but not required for purposes of forest conservancy, was also ordered to be disafforested and made available for paddy cultivation.

15. **Other forest items.**—The formation of a separate Plantation Division with effect from the beginning of 1092 has been of considerable benefit to the department, and planting and thinning operations appear to have in consequence received adequate attention during the year. The stock of timber at the close of 1092 in the sale and forest depots was 9,21,334 cubic feet, against 11,85,932 cubic feet in 1091. The balance is still heavy and instructions have been issued for clearing it off with the least avoidable delay. The coupe-sale system, under which select standing trees in a coupe are marked and sold for a lump-sum offer, introduced in the High Range Division in 1091, was extended to the Quilon Division towards the close of 1092. The necessity for passes for the removal of green manure from private lands was dispensed with. Two new fuel depots were tentatively opened at Aramboly and Darsanamkope. Since the close of the year, the Forest Manual, in the preparation of which much useful labour was spent by Mr. K. S. Narayana Aiyangar, Assistant Conservator of Forests, has been issued. This publication is bound to be of great advantage to the department and the public.

16. **Salt.**—Government have been obliged to raise the selling price of Bombay salt to Bh. Rs. 2-11-6 per maund in the Alleppey, Quilon and Trivandrum port salt depots and to Bh. Rs. 2-12-6 per maund in the bankshalls of the Shencottah taluk, with effect from the 26th Vrischikam 1093, on account of the shortage of freight and the heavy increase in the price of the commodity in Bombay. This circumstance once again brings into prominent relief the question of the development of the home-salt industry. With the object of affording protection to the completed factories on the one hand, and, as a precaution, on the other, against the danger of any excessive and sudden reduction in the water-holding capacity of the Manakkudi backwater into which the Pazhayar river discharges itself, the policy of the Government has been to grant lands for salt culture in such a manner as to allow full time for one plot to be worked into a factory before another plot is assigned for that purpose. It is gratifying to note that considerable advance has been made in salt culture in South Travancore during the last decade. In 1083 the areas of salt factories and working pans were 612·48 acres and 219·87 acres respectively and the total outturn of salt.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly